I claim:

1. A low-profile control device for a computer, the control device comprising:
a) a fixed mounting;
b) a control member connected to said fixed mounting by a connecting means and acted upon by two or more spaced-apart fingertips of a user,
c) means for restricting travel of the control member in a predetermined plane, and
d) output means coupled to said control member for generating a vector output signal in response to a force applied by the user in said predetermined plane.

2. A control device according to claim 1 having a wrist-rest surface disposed substantially parallel to said plane.

3. A control device according to claim 2 wherein said control member has an upper surface substantially flush with said wrist-rest surface.

4. A control device according to claim 2 wherein said control member has an upper surface recessed with respect to said wrist-rest surface.

5. A control device according to claim 1 wherein said control member is substantially oval in plan view.

6. A control device according to claim 1 wherein said control member has a dimension parallel to said plane of at least 10mm.

7. A control device according to claim 6 wherein said dimension is at least 20mm.

8. A control device according to claim 1 comprising means for restricting travel of said control member in said plane to 50mm or less.

9. A control device according to claim 1 comprising means for substantially preventing movement of said control member in said plane.

10. A control device according to claim 1 wherein said connecting means comprises a pivot mounting for enabling rotation of said control member in said plane by said user.

11. A control device according to claim 1 wherein said control member has a fingertip-engaging control surface substantially parallel to said plane.

12. A control device according to claim 1 wherein said control member has a fingertip-engaging control surface transverse to said plane.

13. A control device according to claim 1 which includes two transducers for sensing orthogonal components of said force in said plane and generating vector output signal components.

14. A control device according to claim 1 which has at least one user-operable switch means carried in a peripheral region of said control member to generate a switching signal distinct from said vector output signal.

15. A keyboard incorporating a control device according to claim 1.

16. A computer incorporating a control device according to claim 1, the computer having a display and cursor control circuitry for displaying a cursor means on said display, said output means of said control device being coupled to said cursor control circuitry for controlling the movement of said cursor means .

17. A computer according to claim 16 which is a laptop computer having a keyboard and a wrist-wrest area disposed adjacent to said keyboard and wherein said control device is located in said wrist-rest area.

18. A laptop computer having a wrist-rest surface and a pointing device located in said wrist-rest surface, said pointing device comprising:

a) a fixed mounting disposed beneath said wrist-rest surface;

b) a control member located on said fixed mounting for responding to transverse forces generally parallel to said wrist-rest surface applied by two or more spaced-apart fingertips of a user, and

c) output means coupled to said control member for generating a vector output signal in response to said transverse forces.

19. A laptop computer according to claim 18 wherein a recess is formed in said wrist-rest surface and said control member is disposed in said recess.

20. A laptop computer according to claim 18 wherein said control member has an upper surface which is substantially flush with said wrist-rest surface.